



## CSLF School Counselor eNews

March 2009

### March Professional Development Workshop: Sign Up Now

On Friday, March 27th, the Connecticut Student Loan Foundation will be offering a half-day workshop entitled, "The Mystery of the Financial Aid Award and Other Financing Mysteries." Program participants will learn how to decipher a variety of award letters and receive pointers on how to advise students on how to compare their college aid awards. We will also discuss the financial aid appeals process and when it is appropriate for a student to appeal an award. We will also spend some time providing counselors with a federal update regarding the recently passed "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009." The workshop will run from 8:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. and will be held at our Rocky Hill office. Register online by going to [www.cslf.com](http://www.cslf.com).

### Highlights of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

According to an Issue Brief put out by the National Association For College Admission Counseling (NACAC), the Act provides for more than \$100 billion in allocations for education. Many of the Act's provisions will have a positive impact on students and families including:

- An increase to the maximum Pell grant to \$5,350 for the 2009-2010 school year (up \$500).
- The expansion of the work study program. The Act allocates and additional \$200 million for campus based work opportunities.
- Changes to the higher education tax credit. The HOPE tax credit will be replaced with a new "American Opportunity" tax credit of up to \$2,500 per student, per year for tuition and related expenses for up to four years. There are also provisions to expand the income limits for eligible families.
- The expansion of qualified expenses for 529 college savings plans. For 2009 and 2010, in addition to using savings for tuition, fees, room, board and books, families will also be able to purchase computer technology.

#### Admissions Facts

University of Connecticut remains a top choice for students. As of January 31, 2009, UConn reported receiving approximately 23,000 applications for admissions. The only Connecticut institution reporting more applications was Yale at just under 26,000.

### UNIGO - A New College Search Web site Created by Students for Students

In 2002, New York Times reporter Jacques Steinberg, published a book entitled, "Gatekeepers," in which he chronicled the lives of five high school students seeking admissions into some of the country's most exclusive colleges and universities. One of the students he followed was Jordan Goldman whose own admissions journey led him to Wesleyan University, where he graduated in 2004. While still a student at Wesleyan, Goldman decided to share his admissions expertise by

becoming co-editor of "The Students' Guide to Colleges," After graduation, he set his sights on the creation of a college planning Web site. After several years of planning, UNIGO, was launched this fall.

The Web site contains a broad range of college information divided into the following categories: College Admissions, Financial Aid, Internships and Jobs, Student Writing, Study Abroad, College Life, and Point/CounterPoint. Students will be drawn to UNIGO because the mix of content is extremely well written and targeted to a young audience. It has a lot of the same basic information found on other college Web sites but with a much more sophisticated, less preachy delivery.

To find out more information, you can visit the Web site by going to [www.UNIGO.com](http://www.UNIGO.com).

**About Connecticut Student Loan Foundation** – The Connecticut Student Loan Foundation is a non-profit corporation that administers, guarantees, and finances loans within the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). CSLF promotes access to higher education by helping students and their families plan for and pursue a postsecondary education. CSLF has more than 40 years of experience providing assistance to students, parents, and industry partners.

**About Invest in your Future** – Invest in your Future (IF), CSLF's early awareness and college planning services division, provides free outreach services regarding college planning and the financial aid process. The IF program is designed to promote college access and awareness, and includes a college planning resources center and library, a toll-free hotline, community presentations, materials distribution, online resources, and much more.